

Labour

Business Plan 1999-2000 to 2001-02

Accountability Statement

This Business Plan for the three years commencing April 1, 1999 was prepared under my direction in accordance with the Government Accountability Act and the government's accounting policies. All of the government's policy decisions as at February 18, 1999 with material economic or fiscal implications of which I am aware have been considered in preparing the Business Plan.

The Ministry's priorities outlined in the Business Plan were developed in the context of the government's business and fiscal plans. I am committed to achieving the planned results laid out in this Business Plan.



Murray Smith
Minister of Labour
February 25, 1999

Vision

Alberta's prosperity requires an effective labour relations framework; safe and healthy workplaces; and high standards in employment practices and safety services.

Mission

Alberta Labour works in partnership with Albertans to promote safe and healthy workplaces, a quality working life and comprehensive safety systems. The Ministry is committed to providing effective services through innovation, leadership and accountability.

The department's mission also contributes to Alberta's economic growth through its support of a productive workforce. The department of Labour supports open and accountable government and the protection of privacy for Albertans through the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Core Businesses

The Ministry's six core businesses reflect Alberta Labour's organization and activities:

- Promote the development of effective work site health and safety management systems and compliance programs.
- Support fair and effective resolution of labour disputes and workplace issues.
- Promote quality Safety Services throughout the province.
- Promote fair and effective Employment Standards protection for employers and employees.
- Safeguard private pension plans through legislative and administrative processes.
- Maintain a legislative framework that balances access to information with protection of privacy for Albertans.

Goals and Key Strategies

Alberta Labour's goals support economic development through a productive, fair and safe work environment. The department's legislative, policy and service framework is based on strategies which focus on partnerships and accountability. For the period 1999 to 2002, the Ministry's strategies will:

- Increase our productivity in the Workplace Health and Safety program, the Safety Services program, Labour Relations programs, and the Employment Standards to meet customers' demands arising from continued economic growth and increased industrial activity.
- Support innovative practices and approaches, and continuous program improvements in the workplace to ensure our partnerships are accountable and effective.
- Listen to our customers to ensure effective implementation of Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy legislation.
- Achieve the government's initiatives of "People and Prosperity" in policies related to workplace and employment pensions issues. Labour is dedicated to the achievement of the goal "making the most of workplace innovation". Strategies have been identified that deal with exploring means to

implement best practices in human resource development. We will also examine benefits and private pension plan issues arising from our economy's widening range of employment relationships.

- Enhance information technology, management information systems, and accountability frameworks to meet our customers' needs.
- Partner with other departments on key government issues, and share services to realize productivity gains in our operations.
- Implement the recommendations of the Growth Summit. The minimum wage review was completed and a three-phase increase, beginning in October 1998, was announced. Other findings of the regulatory review (e.g. special hours of work, overtime provisions in industry sectors and exemptions) will be addressed through 1999.
- Continue to increase departmental productivity and maintain a stable cost environment.

Goal – *Safe and healthy workplaces*

Key Strategies

- Promote a preventive approach to workplace health and safety by working with industry partners to encourage employers and workers to build effective health and safety programs.
- Provide compliance programs targeting poor health and safety performers and uncontrolled hazards.
- Respond promptly to workplace complaints and provide advice and recommendations to customers to enable them to address health and safety issues.
- Work with industry groups and associations in the development of codes of practice, recommended practices, safe operating procedures and standards, identification and management of hazards and safety information.
- Ensure legislation and regulations support meaningful and productive standards of practice. The review will be conducted from spring 1999 through 2002.

Goal – *Fair and balanced labour relations*

Key Strategies

- Provide strategic labour relations advice, information and options to the department and its customers.
- Monitor the effectiveness of Alberta's labour relations legislation and provide strategic policy analysis and advice in consultation with customers.
- Build partnerships with and among customers to enhance constructive industry and workplace relationships, and promote innovations/best practices that increase the productivity and competitiveness of Alberta organizations.
- Promote alternative dispute resolution approaches through consultation, relationship building, interest-based bargaining and labour/management partnerships to enable labour and management to resolve issues without the need for third party intervention.
- Provide impartial third party mediation assistance, on request, to prevent and resolve labour disputes.

Key Strategies – Labour Relations Board *

- The Labour Relations Board will provide fair, impartial and efficient resolution of applications, complaints and other matters in dispute under the *Labour Relations Code* and the *Public Service Employee Relations Act*.

* The Labour Relations Board's business plan is included in this plan.

Goal - Provide a Safety Services system, through our partners, that is effective, accountable and affordable.

Key Strategies

- Increase public awareness and understanding of the purpose of codes and standards adopted under the Safety Codes Act.
- Encourage municipalities, corporations and other partners to participate in the administration of the safety system. Ensure the roles and responsibilities of all partners are clearly understood and support our safety needs.
- Develop policies and procedures, in conjunction with the Safety Codes Council, to ensure safety standards are consistently applied throughout the province.
- Develop and implement accountability programs using a risk management approach that will monitor the effectiveness of safety programs. The development has been initiated and is planned to expand through 1999 and 2000.
- Participate in the ongoing development, maintenance and adoption of national and international codes and standards, in consultation with the public, industry, other jurisdictions and the Safety Codes Council.

Goal – Effective employment standards and practices which accurately reflect a changing workplace.

Key Strategies

- Educate industry groups, employees and employers about Employment Standards rights and responsibilities.
- Establish a customer advisory group, and consult with our customers, to ensure that Employment Standards delivery and policies serve the needs of Albertans. The customer consultations will take place between January and December 1999.
- Emphasize policy and processes to ensure services are impartial, consistently customer focussed, and meet the needs of the workplace.
- Provide compliance programs to deal with chronic violators of the *Employment Standards Code*.
- Target industries with poor employment standards compliance performance and implement strategies to improve compliance, beginning in 1999.
- Resolve complaints through the increased use of counselling and mediation.
- Increase service productivity resulting from economic growth, and maintain stable operational costs.

Goal – Ensure the equity and security of private pension benefits.

Key Strategies

- Make recommendations based on the results of the public review of the private pension legislation. The public review started in August 1998 and is expected to result in legislative amendments in 1999.
- Work with other pension regulatory authorities and interested customers in matters concerning uniform minimum standards and the administration of registered plans, including the development of a risk assessment system.
- Develop and implement on-site audits to help ensure compliance with legislation beginning in 1999.

Goal – Fair and effective access to information and protection of privacy.

Key Strategies

- Support the local public bodies in the implementation of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. The extension of the FOIP legislation began in September 1998 and will continue through October 1999.
- Respond to the results of the Select Special Committee of the Legislature's review of the *FOIP Act*. The public review was conducted from March to December 1998, with legislative amendments expected in 1999.
- Consult and coordinate with other government departments in all matters related to the legislation, and represent the Alberta Government in federal-provincial consultations on proposed federal privacy legislation for the private sector.

Key Performance Measures

Government

The goals, core businesses and key strategies of Alberta Labour are aligned with the government's emphasis on economic development, productivity and prosperity. Investment in the province is enhanced by cooperative labour relations, fairness, and workplace health and safety.

The "Workplace Climate" core performance measure, as published in the government's annual report, includes person-days lost to workplace injury and disease, and person-days lost to work stoppages.

Workplace Climate Performance Measures

Key Performance Measure	Target	Results
<i>Person-days lost to workplace injury and disease</i> This measure provides an indication of safety in the workplace a) Person-days lost in Alberta Person-days lost per 10,000 person-days worked, three-year average. b) Estimated person-days lost: Person-days lost to workplace injury and disease per 10,000 person-days worked, interprovincial. <i>Person-days lost to work stoppages</i> This measure provides an indication of labour stability in the unionized workplace (person-days lost per 10,000 person-days worked).	The average amount of time lost owing to workplace injuries will be lower than 29.62 Alberta's person-days lost to workplace injury and disease will be ranked among the 3 lowest of all provinces Alberta's person-days lost owing to work stoppages will be ranked among the 3 lowest of all the provinces.	Three-year average number of person-days lost to workplace injury or illness per 10,000 person-days worked: 1997: 29.62 1996: 29.78 1995: 31.81 1994: 35.36 <u>Alberta's Provincial Ranking</u> 1996 (p): 10th (lowest) 1995 (r): 10th (lowest) 1994: 10th (lowest) (p) - preliminary. (r) - revised. Number of person-days lost owing to work stoppages per 10,000 person-days worked. <u>Alberta's Provincial Ranking</u> 1997 (r): 15.58 (2nd highest) 1996: 0.33 (2nd lowest) 1995: 0.71 (lowest) 1994: 0.95 (2nd lowest) (r) - revised.

Ministry Performance Measures

Performance targets have been identified for the key performance measures. The Ministry, with its customers, will continue to examine these measures and targets to identify changes or alternative strategies that should be considered.

Goal – *Safe and healthy workplaces*

(Please refer also to the Workplace Climate measure on workplace injury and disease in the previous section. This measure also forms part of the Ministry's performance measures for this goal.)

Key Performance Measure	Target	Results
Lost Time Claim Rate^a - represents the risk (or probability) of disabling injury or disease to a worker during a period of one year's work. The rate is expressed as a percentage 100.	The Lost Time Claim Rate will not exceed 3.5.	1997: 3.4 ^b 1996: 3.4 ^b 1995: 3.4 ^b 1994: 3.5 1993: 3.5 ^b lowest rate recorded in Alberta

^a Lost Time Claim is a claim for an occupational injury or disease which disables the worker beyond the day of injury. Included are claims for which wages compensation are paid, permanent disability claims, fatalities, and cases in which the injured worker is assigned light duties or other modified work.

Goal – *Fair and balanced labour relations*

(Please refer also to the Workplace Climate measure on work stoppages in the previous section. This measure also forms part of the Ministry's performance measures for this goal.)

Key Performance Measure	Target	Results
The percentage of collective bargaining negotiations which avoid a work stoppage (strike or lockout). - provides an indication of labour stability in unionized workplaces.	99% of collective bargaining negotiations will avoid work stoppages.	1998: 98.3% (preliminary) 1997: 98.2% 1996: 99.2% 1995: 99.0% 1994: 99.6% 1993: 99.9%

Goal – Provide a Safety Services system, through our partners, that is effective, accountable, and affordable.

Key Performance Measure	Target	Results
The percentage of assessed organizations administering the <i>Safety Codes Act</i> that achieve a satisfactory performance rating, as defined by the monitoring program.	95% of assessed organizations administering the <i>Safety Codes Act</i> will achieve a satisfactory performance rating.	1997: 85% of assessed organizations administering the <i>Safety Codes Act</i> achieved a satisfactory rating. Historical data is not available before 1997.

Goal – Effective employment standards and practices which accurately reflect a changing workplace.

Key Performance Measure	Target	Results
The number of complaints registered with Employment Standards for investigation, as a percentage of Alberta's workforce. - indicates the success of efforts to maintain good working relations between workers and employers.	The number of complaints registered for investigation, as a percentage of Alberta's eligible workforce will not exceed 0.60%.	1997: 0.58% 1996: 0.58% 1995: 0.61% 1994: 0.56%

Goal – Ensure the equity and security of private pension benefits.

Key Performance Measure	Target	Results
The percentage of private sector defined benefit pension plans having solvency ratios* equaling or exceeding 0.9 - indicates success in safeguarding the pension entitlements of plan members.	85% of private sector defined benefit pension plans registered in Alberta will have solvency ratios that equal or exceed 0.9.	1997-98: 69% 1996-97: 60% 1995-96: 63%

Key Performance Measure	Target	Results
Percentage of defined benefit pension plan membership covered by plans having solvency ratios* equaling or exceeding 0.9 - ensures that employees in Alberta in private sector pension plans receive a high level of protection from pension plan insolvency.	97% of defined benefit pension plan membership will be covered by plans having solvency ratios that equal or exceed 0.9.	1997-98: 97% 1996-97: 97% 1995-96: 96%

* Solvency ratio means the fraction obtained by dividing the value of the assets of a pension plan by the liabilities of that plan.

Goal –Fair and effective access to information and protection of privacy.

Key Performance Measure	Target	Results
The percentage of FOIP requests completed by government public bodies in 60 days or less This measure provides evidence that government public bodies are complying with the access provisions of the FOIP Act.	95% of FOIP requests to government public bodies will be completed in 60 days or less.	1997-98: 90% 1996-97: 92%
The percentage of FOIP requests completed by government public bodies that result in a complaint to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner. This measure is an indication of satisfaction with the Freedom of Information program in Alberta.	8% or less of FOIP requests to government public bodies will result in a complaint to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner.	1997-98: 8% 1996-97: 12%

Alberta Labour Relations Board

Business Plan 1999-2000 to 2001-02

Introduction

The Labour Relations Board oversees three labour relations statutes:

- The Labour Relations Code;
- The Public Service Employee Relations Act; and
- The Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act.

Employees have the right to seek collective bargaining with their employers. The Labour Relations Code and the Public Service Employee Relations Act guarantee this right and establish a framework for employees to make this choice freely. They describe how a trade union bargains with an employer over terms and conditions of employment to arrive at a collective agreement. Rules of fair play govern trade unions, employers, and employees in their labour relations activities.

The Alberta Labour Relations Board is an independent and impartial tribunal. It is responsible for the day-to-day application and interpretation of these rules and also processes the various applications required by the statutes.

Board activities are largely client and case load driven. The Board maintains tight control over its case handling and vote mechanisms. The Board recognizes that the timely resolution of labour relations differences involves the interests of the public as a whole as well as the interests of the parties directly involved in the difference.

The Labour Relations Code encourages parties to settle their disputes, wherever possible, through honest and open communication. The Board offers informal settlement options to the parties, but it also has inquiry and hearing powers to make binding rulings whenever necessary.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Alberta Labour Relations Board is to support and advance the principles of Alberta's labour relations laws by:

1. educating the labour relations community and the public of their statutory rights and obligations;
2. developing policies and processes that will assist the parties to prevent disputes or resolve their disputes over these rights and obligations without resort to litigation; and
3. providing timely, appropriate, impartial resolution of those disputes.

Core Activities

The Board's core activities arise from the responsibilities placed on it by the Labour Relations Code, Public Service Employee Relations Act, and the Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act. These activities are:

- the investigation, processing, and determination of applications to the Board by parties sharing or seeking to share collective bargaining relationships in Alberta,
- the formal adjudication of disputes arising out of the complaint process,
- the informal mediation of disputes in attempts to limit the need for formal adjudication and help build mutually beneficial relationships between parties,
- the education of Alberta's labour community in the interpretation of Alberta's labour relations legislation and the Board's rules, policies and procedures,
- the development of formal and informal consultative processes with the province's labour relations community to ensure that Board policies and procedures are sensitive to the current realities in the community.

Goals and Strategies

The following goals have been established to ensure that the Board focuses on providing the labour relations community with services that will help foster productive collective bargaining relationships. With strong relationships in place, the parties are in an excellent position to resolve issues. The Board contributes to these practices by: developing a definable set of rules for the parties to abide by, minimizing the costs to the parties during bargaining and the administration of collective agreements after signing, and helping parties balance economic concerns with wear and tear on their relationships.

Goal

It is important from a labour relations perspective that all matters brought before the Board be dealt with as quickly as possible to ensure these situations do not grow into larger, more complicated issues. To this end the Board must provide timely, effective and efficient services to the Alberta labour relations community.

Strategies

- a. Provide notices and correspondence which are clear, timely and precise to ensure the parties understand the procedures and the issues involved.
- b. Investigate applications in a timely and accurate manner to ensure early resolution of disputes.

- c. Update and distribute all relevant information such as Information Bulletins, Guide to Alberta Labour Relations Laws, Board Decisions, forms, web-site, and other materials.
- d. Review the Board's policies, procedures and systems regularly to ensure that they reflect the needs of Alberta's labour relations community.

Performance Measure:

The average time, as measured in the number of working days, to process and complete expedited applications. This provides an indication of the timeliness of the Board's services.

Indicators/Goals:

The average number of days to process applications must be kept at minimal limits for each of the following types of application:

Application Type	Target 1999-2000	Target 2000-01	Target 2001-02
Certification	30 days	29 days	28 days
Revocation	25	23	21
Determination	180	170	160
Bargaining Unit Modification	210	200	190
Successor Union	90	85	80
Employer Unfair Labour Practice	150	145	140
Trade Union Unfair Labour Practice	115	105	90
Proposal Vote	16	15	15
Strike Vote	15	15	15

Goal

In many applications before the Board there is an opportunity for officers during the investigative process to help settle disputes before they get to hearing. These types of facilitated settlements help build relationships between employers and unions to the benefit of all concerned. The Board continues to promote the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution methods to resolve issues before reaching formal hearings.

Strategies

- a. Ensure that board officers develop and maintain the proper facilitation skills required to provide an environment where the resolution of issues can take place.

- b. Increase the exchange of information between the parties and make them aware of alternative sources of information (e.g. Alberta Labour web-site).
- c. Educate the labour community on, and promote the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution as an effective resolution tool.

Performance Measure:

1. Percentage of applications, where there is Board Alternative Dispute Resolution involvement, that do not go to hearing*. This provides an indication of the successful use of Alternative Dispute Resolution methods.

Indicator/Goal:

	Target 1999-2000	Target 2000-01	Target 2000-02
Percentage of applications settled with Board Officer with Alternative Dispute Resolution techniques.	30	31	32

* Not including Certification, Revocation, Strike/lockout applications which are required to go to hearing.

LABOUR
MINISTRY INCOME STATEMENT
(Thousands of dollars)

	Comparable 1997-98 Actual	Comparable 1998-99 Budget	Comparable 1998-99 Forecast	1999-2000 Estimates	2000-01 Target	2001-02 Target
REVENUE						
Premiums, Fees and Licences	1,972	1,165	1,600	1,316	1,316	1,316
Other Revenue - Workers' Compensation Board for Occupational Health and Safety programs	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
Other Revenue - various	268	30	125	130	130	130
MINISTRY REVENUE	8,240	7,195	7,725	7,446	7,446	7,446
EXPENSE						
Program						
Ministry Support Services	6,766	5,175	5,175	5,630	5,674	5,709
Workplace Health, Safety and Strategic Services	8,383	9,310	9,060	9,250	9,446	9,582
Technical and Safety Services	10,096	11,140	10,880	11,059	11,182	11,364
Labour Relations Adjudication and Regulation	1,835	1,740	1,740	1,800	1,825	1,850
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy	855	935	935	950	962	974
Valuation Adjustments and Other Provisions	382	10	10	10	10	10
MINISTRY EXPENSE	28,337	28,310	27,810	28,699	29,099	29,499
Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Capital Assets	(150)	-	-	-	-	-
MINISTRY NET OPERATING RESULT	(20,247)	(21,115)	(20,085)	(21,253)	(21,653)	(22,053)

CONSOLIDATED NET OPERATING RESULT
(Thousands of dollars)

	Comparable 1997-98 Actual	Comparable 1998-99 Budget	Comparable 1998-99 Forecast	1999-2000 Estimates	2000-01 Target	2001-02 Target
Ministry Revenue	8,240	7,195	7,725	7,446	7,446	7,446
Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments	-	-	-	-	-	-
Consolidated Revenue	8,240	7,195	7,725	7,446	7,446	7,446
Ministry Program Expense	28,337	28,310	27,810	28,699	29,099	29,499
Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments	-	-	-	-	-	-
Consolidated Program Expense	28,337	28,310	27,810	28,699	29,099	29,499
Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Capital Assets	(150)	-	-	-	-	-
CONSOLIDATED NET OPERATING RESULT	(20,247)	(21,115)	(20,085)	(21,253)	(21,653)	(22,053)